



Sparks Tourism Facility and Revitalization Steering Committee
Agenda Item 7.1

Meeting Date: March 24, 2021

Note: this Staff Report serves Exhibit 1 to Resolution No. 6, which it accompanies

Title

Consideration, discussion, and possible adoption of Resolution No. 6, advising the Sparks City Council to expend up to \$150,000 of Transient Lodging Tax proceeds to seek matching grant funding and commission, acquire and install works of art and associated site enhancements in the plaza area of Victorian Square (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

Petitioner

City of Sparks

Presenter

Francine Burge, Special Events Supervisor, City of Sparks

Recommendation

City staff recommends that the Committee adopt Resolution No. 6.

Agenda Item Brief

This agenda item requests that the Sparks Tourism Facility and Revitalization Steering Committee ("Committee") review and adopt Resolution No. 6. The resolution advises and recommends to the Sparks City Council that it expend up to \$150,000 of Lodging Tax proceeds to commission, acquire and install a unique piece of art, and associated complementary artworks and site enhancements, in Victorian Square. This project is included in the recommendations from the Victorian Square Creative Placemaking plan, approved by the City Council in May 2020. If the Committee authorizes the use of Lodging Tax proceeds for this purpose the City will apply for a grant to match the funds.

Background

In 2003, the Nevada Legislature enacted, and the Governor signed into law, Assembly Bill 205. This legislation, subsequently codified in Chapter 432, Statutes of Nevada, Sec. 6.6 to 6.9, imposed an additional tax at the rate of two and half percent (2.5%) on the gross receipts from the rental of transient lodging in the City of Sparks ("Lodging Tax"). The Lodging Tax is paid to the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority which distributes the proceeds to the City Council of Sparks. The City Council may expend these proceeds after obtaining the "advice and recommendations" of the Sparks Tourism Facility and Revitalization Steering Committee ("Committee"), which is created per Sec. 6.8 of Chapter 432.

The Committee is required, per Sec. 6.9 of Chapter 342, to develop a master plan that identifies:

- Proposed projects or capital improvements that the Committee has determined would be advisable to promote tourism in Washoe County.
- Method(s) pursuant to which the proposed projects and capital improvements identified in the plan will be financed.

The Committee first adopted a Master Plan in 2004, amended it in 2008, and amended it again in 2016. The 2016 update added “Public Art” as an appropriate use of Lodging Tax proceeds. The Master Plan calls for Lodging Tax expenditures to acquire (through purchase, lease or on loan) or retain artworks to be placed on or presently located on public property within Victorian Square, defined as the area between 15th Street on the west, Pyramid Way on the east, Interstate 80 on the south and Victorian Plaza Circle/D Street on the north. The stated intent of the Master Plan is to acquire and install, over a period of years, a collection of artworks that increases awareness and the appeal of Victorian Square for both visitors and local residents while contributing to the revitalization of Victorian Square. Installation costs are permitted. The selection of artworks is to be based on the recommendations of the City’s Arts and Culture Advisory Committee or other advisory body to the Sparks City Council.

In 2020, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee produced a creative placemaking plan for downtown. The “Together We See Sparks Creative Placemaking Plan” for Victorian Square was approved by the City Council in May 2020. This plan is part of the renewed embrace of art to enhance the downtown region as a gathering place for the citizens and visitors.

One of the recommendations from the plan is to commission a work of art. From the plan: *“Recommendation #2: Commission a permanent work of public art in Victorian Square’s central plaza, the area of open space from the Nugget’s North Entrance to the Galaxy Theatre’s entrance. It is recommended that consideration be given to art that connects the plaza in some way. Since the artist will need to work with the planning department as they develop the site as a gathering space, this project is high priority.”*

Since, it is anticipated, Victorian Square’s plaza will need to be reconstructed following redevelopment of adjacent privately-owned parcels, the site being considered for the commissioned art piece is just south of the plaza. It is the location of the former “Four Seasons” fountain. The fountain and concrete statues have been removed and the City plans to install a 15-foot pedestal in this space. With both water and power available, and a proposed pedestal that can hold up to 20,000 pounds, the art options for this site are expansive. This project will be designed to complement the reconstruction of Victorian plaza. Other projects include murals, light pole metal signage and landscaping to enhance the commissioned art piece.

Analysis

This agenda item requests that the Committee review and adopt Resolution No. 6, which advises and recommends to the Sparks City Council that it expend up to \$150,000 of Lodging Tax proceeds to commission, acquire and install a unique piece of art, and associated complementary artworks and site enhancements, in Victorian Square.

If the Committee adopts Resolution No. 6, City staff will request permission from City Council to submit a grant application to the National Endowment for the Arts for matching funds. City staff's goal is to seek public input (a crucial part of creative placemaking) for themes and parameters of the artwork, issue a call to artists for proposals, and select a piece to be fabricated and installed during City fiscal year 2023-24. The associated projects would be completed in the same time frame.

The City's Victorian Square Lodging Tax fund had an unaudited ending fund balance at the end of fiscal year 2020 (June 30, 2020) of \$4,838,018. The City's current commitments for use of Lodging Tax proceeds total approximately \$1,744,000, including a previously approved appropriation for public art, three remaining annual payments to the Sparks Nugget for construction of the Nugget Events Center, three remaining annual payments to Syufy Enterprises for renovation of the movie theater facility for Galaxy Theatres, and the recently approved appropriation of \$800,000 for Section 4 of the Victorian Square Infrastructure Improvement Project. The City thus currently has the financial capacity to not only expend \$150,000 for the proposed commissioned art project but to also fund other projects as they arise, subject to Committee and City Council approvals.

If the Committee adopts Resolution No. 6, staff will forward it to the City Council and, if the Committee's recommendations are adopted by the City Council, will seek matching funds.

Alternatives

The Committee's alternatives to approving Resolution No. 6 as presented include:

- a) approving it with changes;
- b) providing direction to City staff for revision and consideration by the Committee at a future meeting; and,
- c) denying the request.

Proposed Motion

I move to approve the adoption of Resolution No. 6 advising the Sparks City Council to expend up to \$150,000 of Transient Lodging Tax proceeds to seek matching grant funding and commission, acquire and install works of art and associated site enhancements in the plaza area of Victorian Square.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Francine Burge". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line striking through the middle of the letters.

Francine Burge, Special Events Supervisor, City of Sparks

Attachments:

- Resolution No. 6, Sparks Tourism Facility and Revitalization Steering Committee